

- That a stranger is someone neither you nor they know well.
- To run to the nearest public place, neighbor or safe house if they think they are being followed.
- To tell you if anyone asks them to keep a secret, offers them gifts or money, or asks to take their picture.
- To always tell you about something that happened while they were away from you that made them feel uncomfortable in any way.



WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

We invite you to join the partnership. You can become a Reserve Police Officer, join a Community Neighborhood Watch Group, attend the Citizen's Police Academy, become a Police Volunteer, participate in a citizen ride-along or just communicate your concerns and ideas to our Officers.

Together, we can make a difference!

For more information contact:

COMMUNITY ACTION
&
INFORMATION UNIT
(650) 903-6357 OR (650) 903-6707

City of Mountain View Police Department
1000 Villa Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

Web Site Address:
<http://www.mvpd.gov>

Email Address:
police@mountainview.gov

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DO YOU HAVE A LATCHKEY CHILD?
MOUNTAIN VIEW POLICE DEPARTMENT

HOW TO MAKE IT SAFER FOR YOUNG CHILDREN HOME ALONE...

Latchkey children are those who must stay home alone to take care of themselves for some part of the day. An estimated five to twelve million children between the ages of five and 13 are home alone for some part of the day.

Children in self-care are about three times more likely than those supervised by adults to be victimized, involved in accidents, or be engaged in delinquent behavior.

Some children enjoy caring for themselves and happily accept the added responsibilities. Others may be lonely, bored or scared. For all of them, the self-care experience is an opportunity for parents to discuss all aspects of safety and crime prevention, as well as build their children's self-esteem, confidence and competence. Studies show that a close relationship with parents may decrease or moderate any negative effects of self-care.

SELF-CARE SKILLS

Parents should focus on setting rules and limits, increasing levels of responsibility, and communicating basic safety information to promote self-care skills. Children who understand why they must be left alone, and know what they may or may not do, will be safer in the home.

HOUSEHOLD ROUTINES

If your children are to be in charge of themselves at home, discuss the routines they are to follow - household chores, pets to tend, homework, family policies on visiting friends or having friends visit them, and what to do when the telephone or doorbell rings.

If you are not going to be coming home at your regular time, let your children know!

SCHOOL RESOURCES

Check your school's policies concerning absences and the release of your children to anyone but you. Be sure the school will:

- Release your child only to persons previously designated by you.
- Verify and place a telephone call stating anyone other than a designated person will be picking up your child (by calling you back at your listed number).
- Notify you whenever your child is not in class.

(Some schools have a parent alert program that uses volunteers to call parents if their children are

not in school. To start such a program, contact your school or a local volunteer group.)

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN...

- To memorize their full name and address, including city and state.
- To memorize their telephone number, including area code.
- To use both push-button and dial telephones to make emergency, local and long distance calls and how to reach the operator.
- To always check with you or a neighbor immediately after arriving home.
- Never to go into your home if an exterior door is open or a window is broken.
- How to work door and window locks and to lock them.
- How to get out of the house quickly in case of a fire.
- Not to go into anyone else's home without your permission.
- Never to go anywhere with another adult unless you make arrangements ahead of time.
- Adopt a family code word to use if you have to ask a third party to pick up your children, so that your children know the person is safe.
- To avoid walking or playing alone.